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ABSTRACT

Contrast between the appearances and the reality of several aspects of a school environment, including a participative management style, a democratic leadership style, the principal's image as democratic, and attentiveness to student needs is discussed as related to a boarding school in Israel. During an exploratory case study, observations were made regarding the attempts by this boarding school to socialize lower socioeconomic students to the mainstream of Israeli culture. The situational experiences that were observed gave evidence that the school was not organized or governed in a participatory manner, but was autocratic. While not generalizable to any specific populations, the study concluded that the staff held a stereotypical concept of students that affected the organization of the school. Also, educational administrators are cautioned not to deceive themselves by cultivating the appearance, instead of the reality, of school-based management. Two pages of references, an organizational chart, and student daily schedules are attached. (LMS)

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Appearance and Reality in the World of Personnel in a Stressful Educational Setting: Practices Inhibiting School Effectiveness in an Israeli Boarding School

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Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, New Orleans, April 5-9, 1988.

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Appearance and Reality in the World of Personnel in a Stressful Educational Setting: Practices Inhibiting School Effectiveness in an Israeli Boarding School

"In their capacity as performers, individuals will be concerned with maintaining the impression that they are living up to the many standards by which they and their products are judged."

Erving Goffman, 1959

Boarding schools, along with other social agents have been designated, during the last decades, the mission of coping with the problem of social integration, in Israel's Jewish population, by socializing youth from low SES background (mostly from mid-eastern and North African Jewish ethnic groups) into the mainstream of Israeli culture, by providing them with adequate academic training and socialization that would, supposedly, equalize their opportunities, for social mobility with those of the Israeli mainstream youth (Eisikovits & Beker, 1985; *Report of the Prime Minister Committee on Children and Youth in Distress*, 1973). Indeed, boarding school eduction has been pervasive in Israel, by far more than in other countries. Approximately 18 percent of Israeli students 13 to 17 years old, get their education in 350 such settings (*Report of Prime Minister Committee*, 1973), compared to less than 5% in UK, or in the USA. Thus, boarding schools became a focus of social interest and a major domain of educational research (e.g. Arieli, M., Kashti, Y., Shlasky, S., 1983; Kashti, Y., Arieli, M., 1976; Shapira, R., Kashti, Y., Arieli, M., 1967). Granted, this type of school has some ideosyncratic characteristics, reflecting, to a

considerable extent, Goffman's (1961) "total institution" category. Yet, a socialization organization it is, and has much in common with other educational organizations. Thus, findings of research in boarding schools seem to be relevant to other educational organizations, such as day-schools, and, possibly, to organizations in general, as well. In line with the presented national goals, boarding school principals and other education personnel reiterate commitment to the social development of their *disadvantaged students**, as well as to elevating their academic achievements to the extent that the students are prepared for competing for higher social statuses than their parents hold (Arieli, Kashti, and Shlaski, 1983).

However, close observations in *Virtues* **, a school of that kind indicate that various processes in the work-life of personnel at this social setting obstruct the attainment of both the instrumental and expressive goals, which are replaced by organization maintenance goals and personal needs for survival. One type of these processes, that was found to be a pervasive phenomenon, may be termed 'generating appearances'.

'Generating appearances' is defined as a social process of creating, either consciously or unconsciously, agreed upon mental constructs (images) to substitute for desired or valued, unrealized realities. This is compatible, to some extent, with Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective observation: "The cultural values of an establishment will determine in detail how the participants are to feel about many matters and at the same time establish a framework of appearances that must be maintained whether or not there is feeling behind the appearances" (p.243).

The case study of the boarding school personnel world has been conducted in line with the tenets of the phenomenological paradigm in the

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* The term disadvantaged (in Hebrew "Teunei Tipuah") indicates in Israel a composite of social economic attributes such as low family income, parent low education, etc. and refers, mostly, to minority ethnic youth from urban neglected neighborhoods, development towns, and other poor settlements.

** All names are pseudonyms.

social sciences, as interpreted by Alfred Schutz (1970a; 1970b). Thus, the major insturments were participant observations followed by interviews with the actors for dicovering recurrent patterns of interaction and the meanings imputed to these interactions by the actors themselves ("first order" knowledge). The patterns of behavior and "first order" knowledge are the data utilized by the social scientist in creating the "second order" knowledge -- a system of interrelated concepts based on the "first order" knowledge and drawing from, as well as connecting to, the relevant social science theory. Thus, understanding of the social situation is gained.*

The population observed was the entire educational personnel of *Virtues*, a secondary Israeli coed boarding school, educating youth, mostly from deprived background.

Virtues is located in the outskirts of a middle-size Israeli town. It was established at the end of World War II in order to serve as a home for refugee children from Europe. However, it has since changed the type of its population; since the late 1950s it has catered, mostly, to students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. It is now a four-year agricultural and vocational secondary school with 300 14 to 18-year-old students.

Like most boarding schools in Israel, *Virtues* contains the folowing formal sub-systems"**. First, the *sub-system which operates the teaching*, its structure resembling that of a day school. It is directed by a headmaster, assisted by a deputy, and staffed by teachers. Second, the sub-system which deals with students' living arrangements - *in loco parentis* ; their extra-curricular education and their social education (the *residential sub-system*); it is headed by a sub-system coordinator (the *chief madrich)* and staffed by *madrichim* *** (housefathers) and housemothers. (Formally

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* For a well conceived account of the *phenomenological paradigm* see Phillipson's (1972a; 1972b) two compolementary articles.

** The organization chart delineated with collaboration of the principal (Appendix A) is supposed to reflect that structure.

*** Hebrew; in singular-*madrich*

housemother, report to the chief housemother). Third, the sub-system for farm management and for the training and employment of the students at work (the *occupational sub-system*): it is staffed by vocational and agricultural instructors. Fourth, the *counselling sub-system* , which is staffed by social workers and/or educational counsellors periodically reinforced by a visiting team of psychologists. The head of the boarding school is the principal who, together with the heads of the sub-systems, acts as the school's formal executive.

In the study, of which this article has drawn the data, personnel members were observed, for a period of more than a year, interacting among themselves and/or with students in a variety of situations, such as, management meetings, personnel meetings, student work interactions, classroom lessons, social activity of peer groups with housefathers, services (prayer), various informal encounters, etc. In this article a selection of 'appearances' are presented (p.4 ff.); plausible factors explaining the 'appearances' phemomenon are described (p.14ff.), related organizational behavior patters are suggested (p.19 ff.); a literary analogy is presented (p.26); and tentative conclusions are drawn (p. 26ff.).

SELECTED APPEARANCES

The pervasive *appearances* accounted for are: (1) a participative management system; (2) informal relationships and 'familiarity' relationships; (3) principal's image as democratic and people oriented leader; (4) democratic leadership style; (5) status blindedness; (6) competence and effectiveness; and (7) attentiveness to student needs.

(1) A *participative management system.* A variety of weekly formal personnel meetings are scheduled:

Sunday	8:30	Housefathers with *chief madrich* and the principal.
	10:00	Residential sub-system personnel (housefathers, housemothers, *chief madrich*, chief housemother and social worker with a team of psychologists).
	12:30	Psychologists team meeting with the social worker, *chief madrich* and principal dealing with individual student problems.
Wednesday	18:00	Schooling sub-system management (headmaster, deputy headmaster, track coordinators, cohort coordinators) with participation of *chief madrich* and the principal, at *Yisrael's* office
Friday	11:00	The *chief madrich* and the principal with the housefathers for briefing them regarding the Sabbath schedule.

This abundance of personnel formal meetings creates an appearance of a, supposedly, 'participative management system' (Likert 1961; 1967). However, when the actual decision making process (one of the major factors in defining a management system type), is detected, there is no doubt that reality is incompatible with appearance. Rather than participative, the management system is clearly authoritative, despite the 'smiling package' it comes in.

One word in that schedule called for suspicion, initially; namely, the word "briefing"* on Friday's meeting, which does not seem to fit in a participative management system framework. This suspicion gradually increased when the participant observer unveiled what actually happens in these meetings.

No incident of participative decision making in any of the meetings was noted. In most cases Yaron (the principal), and/or Gamliel (the chief

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* 'Tidruch' in Hebrew, which has a connotation of enforcement and is frequently used in the army, for pre-operation instructions given by a commander to his soldiers.

housefather), either informed, or instructed the others on issues relevant to the operation of the school. In these meetings, housefathers (*madrichim*) were constantly reminded, by Gamliel, to write down the information and instructions passed to them in small notebooks, supplied to each madrich, with the instruction to carry it always in his pocket for writing down any note relevant to his daily activity. *Madrichim* who neglected to comply with this instruction (a very rare incident) were instantly and publicly deplored by *Gamliel*. Moreover, the agenda was always found to have been prepared by *Gamliel* and/or *Yaron*, almost always in *Yaron's* office. At this occasions decision to be passed on later, were concluded. An illustration of such is the following account:

> *Yaron*, who has been on a couple of days leave from a three-week military service in a reserve unit in the IDF, and is about to be picked up by an army car, is sitting in his office (by far more impressive than any other office at *Virtues*) in a manager chair, dressed in uniforms, wearing his officer rank , behind a large desk. In front of him *Gamliel* sits on a simple chair. Each one of them has a little pile of papers. They have been updating each other regarding recent and forthcoming activities at*Virtues* and making decisions. *Yaron* hands over a clip of paper: "Take a look and see if it is OK". *Gamliel* nodes in consent. *Yaron*: "So make a phone call to them". *Gamliel* writes down something. *Yaron* moves on to the 12th graders' annual trip planning, "I thought, maybe, *Nehamah** should be invited to join the trip to Sinai Desert". I have not proposed it to her, because I thought that..." *Gamliel* interjects: "OK, OK".

Contrary to the appearance of a 'participative management system', the power at *Virtues* is centralized. It is *Yaron* and *Gamliel* who make all decisions, on any issue - big or small.

The appearance of a participative management system is intensified by the following, (2) - (5), sattelite appearances:

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* Chief Secretary at *Virtues*

(2) *Informal relationships and 'familiarity'* . Personnel at all levels approach each other by first name. Employees of all ranks come into the offices of the principal and the headmaster freely, at any time, even interrupting meetings; at personnel meetings especially those convened at *Yaron's* relatively spacious office, tables are heaped with fruit and cakes, and tea or coffee are served. This appearance of informal familiarity seems to be well addressed by Goffman's (1959) observation: "Among team-mates the privilege of familiarity - which may constitute a kind of intimacy without warmth - need not be something of an organic kind, slowly developing with the passage of time spent together, but rather a formal relationship that is automatically extended and received as soon as the individual takes a place on the team" (p.88). Along with 'informal familiarity' comes:

(3) *Image maintenance of Yaron's self as both a democratic and people oriented leader.* Such an image persists even after the following event:

> During one of the weekly residential subsystem personnel meetings convened at Yaron's office, the beginning of which seemed to reflect consent and harmony, a disruption of that appearance developed. The issue which both, let stress feelings surface, and, illustrated a stratified reality containing conflicts was recurrent late arrivals of personnel members to Sabbath eve services in the school synagogue.
> *Yaron:* "Performance in accordance with the timetable is important. It spreads like a contagious disease when a housefather or housemother behaves that way". Murmurs of protest are heard. Then one of the older housemothers, in her fifties, *Haya,* approaches the assembly: "*Yaron* may tell it to me a thousand times, but I'm unable". *Yaron* keeps on trying to address the problem, but *Haya* is complaining, loudly, that he requires too much of her. *Rivka* (another housemother, seems to be the same age as Haya): "Last week I arrived late because technically I was unable." *Gamliel:* "Even if we postpone to one hour after the commencement of the Sabbath, late arrivals will persist. (loudly) These are excuses." *Haya* (to *Gamliel*): "How do you know?! (wailing). I am not eighteen." *Simhah* (seems about forty; to *Yaron*): "You promised to be considerate with us. To come three times daily is really impossible". *Haya:* "Physically, too, I am unable." *Yaron:* "One who comes on time, always arrives on time". *Haya:* "I light candles and immediately run away from home." *Yaron:* "Right, that is what each madrich

does". *Minah*: "I am a housewife, too. I am unable to function." *Yaron*: "I am not interested in any excuses; regarding late arrivals there is no end to it!" *Haya:* "How could my work be compared to that of a *madrich* who has nothing to do and can arrive on time?" *Rivkah* (to *Gamliel*): "The word 'excuses' - an extraordinary impudence, I would not have such words." Haya joins her and they both yell at *Gamliel*. *Gamliel* yells back at *Haya*: "There are a hundred employees who know *Gamliel* and I inform you - there won't be any late arrivals!" *Haya*, *Rivka* and *Simha* raise their voices contesting *Gamliel*. Among others, a recurrent complaint they voice is that the *madrichim* have nothing to do. *Yaron* makes an attempt to interject, but *Haya* precedes him: "I am not afraid of your answers." *Yaron* turns to the housemothers: "Say you want to sit again to the bargaining table for restructuring your work..." his voice turns calmer. *Rivka*: "I've been used to lighting candles according to Tel Aviv time, and after 31 years I won't change it." turns to *Gamliel*. "When there is something to be said to *madrichim*, it is said in private, however, housemothers are deplored in public." *Haya* and *Simha* nod in consent. *Haya:* "I am not a robot."

The discussion heats up - three or four participants talk simultaneously. The observer finds it impossible to follow the discussion. It is apparent, however, that the housemothers are expressing emotions with zest. *Simha*, somewhat relaxed, to *Haya:* "It is good to bring out stressful matters." *Haya* (to the whole forum): "We could have resisted the changes *Yaron* introduced. Not with these work conditions had we been hired. To come three times a day, to teach *dinim**, I was not hired by *Levi*** with these work conditions. I was young and could have chosen another job." *Yaron*: "Has any of the housemothers different conditions?" (to *Haya*): I am prepared to offer you to revert to your previous conditions. Now stop talking!" He looks angry, which is reflected in his speech volume. *Haya* would not stop and claims to have said publicly what the others say at informal peer encounters. *Yaron*: "If you don't shut up I won't have you here. You'll find yourself somewhere else." She keeps on talking. *Yaron* requests that she leaves the room. She refuses. *Yaron:* As far as we are concerned you lost your job. You may contact the secretary of your union. A dirty mouth won't be here! In the street!" A complete silence follows for a couple of minutes. The observer is embarassed. He feels as if he appeared in a stranger's

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* Jewish behavior laws
** A former principal

> bedroom, unexpectedly. *Yaron* approaches *Haya*: "I am sorry I had to talk like that to one who has been employed here for so many years..." *Gamliel* takes on the chairman role and moves on to another issue.

The episode illustrates a disruption of an appearance by participants, and reminds the milk bottle episode in Polsky's (1962) *Cottage Six*, the delicate organizational homeostasis was threatened; the leader's powerful response to housemothers' deviance of the harmony and consent appearance, reverted the situation to its former homeostasis. But it also unveiled the stratified reality. *Haya* learned her lesson, became aware of her status in the organization. On the following day she came into the principal's office, apologized and cried. On Friday all *madrichim* and housemothers, including *Haya*, were present on time for services. Thus, the deviance envigored the harmony appearance. In line with Polsky's (ibid) conclusion, it seems sensible to say that, frequently, disruptions expose social structure more authentically than the regular everyday interactions.

A couple of weeks later the following 'postscript' occurred:

> The principal awaited the observer in the open air, and not as usual-behind his desk, looking eager to relate something to him: "I don't get nervous frequently and such a thing had not yet happened this year. However, I think an employee should know the limits... how far he may go..." A brief pause, and he continues: "Usually, once a year I have to interfere so that things go on smoothly." The observer wrote it down and refrained from further discussion lest he might have turned too much of a participant, rather than a research observer.

A detailed description of that event has been presented because it seems to expose several realities that have been found to be covered up by appearances, such as, 'democratic leadership style', 'status blindedness', etc. This also demonstrates the depth of observations into the organization allowed to the observer at *Virtues*.

(4) *Democratic Leadership Style*. At the beginning of the academic year, recently hired personnel (especially *madrichim*), as well as students, seemed to agree with the principal's presentation of self as a democratic and

people oriented leader. In the course of the year, however, this image faded away, as the episode reported on pp. 7-9 indicates. Moreover, contrary to organizational chart presentation, it was realized by the third trimester, that the most powerful figure in the setting is *Gamliel*, champion of the 'iron fist' control style, rather than *Yaron*, who retains the most prestigious position in the organization and keeps the image of "a good father to students". The following was a revelation:

> The observer and a *madrich* are sitting on the lawn; one evening during the third trimester, reviewing various aspects of *Virtues*..... Observer: Who is the most powerful figure in your organization?" *Sinai* (assertively): One and only one, *Gamliel*... most *madrichim* believe so. One may conclude with *Yaron* anything... *Gamliel* decides otherwise, otherwise it will be."

Nevertheless, *Gamliel* is careful not to damage the image of *Yaron*'s superiority, and shows respect, at least in the presence of others:

> Once a delegation of three persons of a placement agency came to learn about 'their' students' adjustment and progress at *Virtues*. The principal being away, *Gamliel* was called for by the secretary to meet the guests. *Gamliel* immediately took on the deputy role, entered *Yaron*'s office, where the guests had already been seated and served refreshments by the secretary. Knowing any information the guests cared to ask for, he performed very well. In the course of the interaction he chose to sit on a stool by Yaron's desk. Several times he seemed to move towards the chair but retreated, his face showing embarassment.

Yaron's chair, a status symbol, stayed untouched. When asked by the observer, after the visit was over, if he always refrains from using *Yaron's* chair, *Gamliel* responded:

> "I use it very rarely, only when I have a chance to be there by myself - it ain't appropriate, you see what I mean, don't you?"

(5) *Status Blindedness* . Comparable to color blindedness (Schofield, 1982), 'status blindedness' is a make believe of irrelevancy of individual, or subsystem status and power to educational activity at *Virtues* . Thus it was found that the organizational chart (Appendix A) is misleading. At an early

stage of the research the seemingly mildly-hierarchical structure was found to be significantly stratified. The organizational chart presents *Gamliel, Tamar* and *Yisrael* as having equal status. If anything, *Yisrael* would be expected to have a higher status, since he is the head of what is perceived, by outsiders, as well as by some employees at *Virtues*, as the most important subsystem (i.e., schooling). However, in reality, not only is *Gamliel* the *primus inter pares* ; his staus exceeds, by far, those of *Tamar* and *Yisrael. Gamliel* is perceived by most actors as the head of the entire residential subsystem and not only as head of housefathers (i.e., *chief madrich*). He was observed exercising his power to boss *Tamar* and the housemothers whose superordinate she, formally, is. Moreover, *Gamliel* does not hesitate to interfere with *Yisrael* 's subsystem routine. For example, once he was seen interrupting a classroom lesson, asking the teacher to send to him an individual student; another time he wrote a note requesting a teacher to allow in class a late student. Teachers are smart enought not to resist such requests, even when they resent this intrusion.

Yaron tried to impose a *status blindedness* perspective regarding students, too. The lowest level' blacksmith craft' track was renamed *metal construction* in an attempt to make it more attractive. Likewise:

> At a management meeting dealing with the girls vocational tracks, *Mania*, the coordinator reports that some girls were moved up from clerical to secreterial track while others were moved down from secretarial to clerical. *Yaron*: "Why moved-up and moved down? Why not transferred?" *Mania:* "The girls say we cannot set them up and they know who is 'high' and who is 'low.'

(6) *Competence and Effectiveness.* An appearance of being on top of things, performing tasks well and attaining the declared goals, is created. Asking how things are going, the recurrent response of the principal was: "No problems" "Everything is alright." So do other personnel members in public. Observations and individual interviews, however, uncover a reality full of hardships; teachers were found to be craving for counsel regarding "ways to cope" with their students,

"ways to get them interested", and rationalizing away poor lessons:

> An eleventh grade academic track English lesson has been attended by the observer. There has been very little student participation and involvement. The teacher relates to the observer. "This is a very difficult class. Ten out of the 25, or so, students don't really belong here... but *Yisrael* requested I keep them in class as long as they don't disrupt the lesson. If they do, I should send them to him to be punished.

Another English teacher seems to be at loss in class. Walking with the observer after the lesson she says:

> "They are not here to study. We can do nothing for them. The reason for them being at *Virtues* is the residential subsystem. There they succeed."
>
> It did not occur to her that the situation there is not better. If there is a difference it is for the worse.

> A ninth grade group madrich tries to handle an evening meeting related to the values of the Sabbath. Several students disturb constantly. They yell at each other, at the *madrich*, whistle and clap hands. Eventually, he warns one of them relative to his misbehavior the day before. A student sitting next to the observer confides to him that his misbehaving peer participated in a practical joke. They convinced the *madrich* to get down to an underground shelter, locked him in and let him shouting for help for about an hour before they unlocked the shelter and let him go free. The *madrich* confirmed the story, after the meeting, adding, he could not even make a fuss over this behavior because he was embarassed to share his shame with other personnel members.

Obviously, reality is not 'everything is alright' or 'no problem', as the principal responds to any inquiry of the observed.

(7) *Empathy with Students and Attentiveness to their Needs.* The principal is presented by his wife in the course of a visit at the family residence (a second floor apartment, above *Virtues* central offices) as 'the right man in the right place'. "As a Holocaust surviver child he himself grew up in a boarding school and who else would sympathize more with the students...?" Yaron adds:

> "The boarding school principalship role has been my professional life desire. I think a comprehensive care of students is more effective than a day school, and provides better conditions for advancing them." He presents a student typical day schedule (Appendix B) "I closed their day so they don't have free time to think about the troubles at home. Most of the students we get have lost their self-confidence, failures at school, destroyed homes, sick father, old, alcoholists, gamblers, a brother in jail, a sister went out to the street, from distressed neighborhoods, such as *Hope, Akiba's Light*..."

It is common knowledge at *Virtues* that their students are 'disadvantaged'. Any reference to the student population is accompanied by realistic descriptions of their background. For example:

> A *blacksmith craft* instructor: "...destroyed homes, mothers involved in prostitution and fathers connected to the underworld..." A housefather: "...alcoholist parents, chronical diseases, and some drug addicts". Boys vocational tracks coordinator: "I am sure 140 out of the 280 who reside in school would have become criminals, hadn't they come to *Virtues*.". Headmaster: "...children of mideastern ethnic communities, coming from homes with no bookshelves,... not reading a newspaper...roaming at street corners".

This is compatable with Goffman's (1961) observation regarding intellectual preponderance of 'total institution' personnel with characterization, definition, or labelling of students, as well as with the following report of interactions in teachers' lounge, during break time.

> *Erellah* (teacher and cohort coordinator) (regarding the problems of teaching in a clerical vocation class): "...who said they should study? Maybe they have to be here only in order not to roam in the streets? Housekeeping and manners - that's all that can be done with them." *Mania* (girls' vocational tracks coordinator): "Then it is not for me... (keeps talking on the learning difficulties of the girls - too noisy to record)... the math, teacher says they cannot transfer what they learned in one lesson to the next one." *Erellah:* A problem of 'disadvantaged', don't know to infere from case x to case y; what they have learned in 'reading comprehension', they won't know when they come to you." *Mania:* Most of the work in such classes has to be done in workshop mode. You cannot work with them in a fronal lesson (two other teachers join in).

Teacher A: "Application, they have a problem with that." Teacher B: "The problem of transfer is also from one subject to another..." (some noisy male teachers come in and the discussion is terminated)*.

REASONS FOR, AND FUNCTIONS OF, GENERATING APPEARANCES

Several plausible factors, simultaneously acting - either additively, or synergetically, emerged as explanation of the phenomenon described above:

a. *Stress on the job.* The organizational structure and functions contain some of the important characteristics of Goffman's (1961) 'total institution'** ideal type, such as: the physical plant contains barriers to social intercourse with the outside world (a high barbwire fence, a guard at the gate around the clock, etc.); all aspects of inmate lives are conducted in the same place, and under the same single authority; treating all inmates alike in large batches, requiring them to do the same thing; daily activities are tightly scheduled(see Appendix B), the sequence being imposed from above; etc. One of the recurrent outcomes in such settings is stress experienced by both students and personnel, especially the lower status (front-line) ones. *Virtues* contains more than a few of the totality attributes explicated by Goffman (1961). Indeed, pressure was found to be pervasive at all levels, except, maybe, the principalship.

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* Stereotyping and derogative labelling have been recurrent ways of mental preparation for delegitimizing groups or individuals and outlawing them (e.g., Octavianus vs. Cleopatra in the ancient world; Nazis vs. Jews; Israeli Government vs. PLO leaders, etc.).

** Since the boarding school described contains some important attributes (e.g., staying at *Virtues* is, largely, voluntary; students have frequent free weekends for home visits; students find ways to slip out of the premises and spend time at the neighboring town; etc.) that limit its classification into the 'total institution' category, the author has not commited himself to this concept, preferring a milder one, namely 'total living setting' or when specifically referring to "Virtues" 'stressful educational setting'.

Regarding students, the typical day schedule (Appendix B) seems to be self-explanatory. It, ostensibly, fits in a total living setting.

The posture of personnel members, whenever seen or heard, is one of non-stop engagement in work, accompanied by feelings of stress in face of the never ending tasks, and few rewarding successes. Low status staff, especially at the residential subsystem are constantly being put in 'immediacy' situations (Delamont, 1973) by inmates as well as subordinates. A *madrich*, who seems to experience a role conflict, expresses his despair:

> I don't really know what to do first. I don't even know if I can do everything that people want me to do. The kids want me to be their representative and friend. The big shots here want me to be a pliceman, the teachers want me to see to it that the students do their homework. The housemothers want me to give them a hand in keeping the dormitories clean and tidy. This is all mission impossible.

Referring to the housemother outburst at the residential subsystem personnel meeting reported above (pp. 7-9) the chief housemother told the observer that "it was not against the *madrichim*... rather against the situation...there is stress on the job."

This multitude of requirements may explain, at least partly, the tremendous turnover of *madrichim*. Eight out of the nine *madrichim* at *Virtues* had been recently hired, and only one of them was about to stay.

> When encountered on the outdoor premises hurrying and looking tense, *Gamliel*, the chief *madrich*, relates to the observer: "We're short in *madrichim*, such a difficult year I cannot recall. Two problems are solved, ten new ones emerge."

In addition, stress seems to be felt by *madrichim* due to inferiority in professional training. None of them, including the chief *madirich* has any formal post-secondary education, while most of the teachers are university graduates, some of them even gained a Master's degree. Certified is the social worker, too. Her superior status in the decision making process at meetings regarding individual students, aroused after one such meeting the

following resentful response of a *madrich:*

> I know, I know. She has a B.A. or a M.A. or something like that. I haven't. But I know the kids much better than she does. I live with them. I am really with them, while she and her kind come in their little cars at 9:00 in the morning and vanish at 2:00. How can you be really involved with the kids if you're not around?

Moreover, the vast majority of personnel members, including teachers, have not received any substantial training in teaching or working with 'disadvantaged' youth. Most of them structure frontal lessons. Even some of the *madrichim*, whose function it is to be social counsellors of inmates, use this pattern of behavior in social and cultural activities with their inmate groups. It seems that stress has a perpetual self-generating mechanism.

b. *Frustration due to paucity of rewards.* Time and again personnel members approached the observer asking for advice/tips, complaining they feel their work and efforts at *Virtues* do not draw recognition of the outside society, and/or the students.

For example:

> One evening, at about 10:30 p.m. the observer was on his way to leave the premises. Before reaching the gate, *Shekel*, the coordinator of boys vocational tracks, a man in his early 60's awaited him. Standing outdoors, *Shekel* talked and talked for almost an hour about the difficulties they encounter in teaching and socializing the youth at *Virtues* and reiterated several times the expression: "but in the outside society they don't appreciate the hard and important, or rather holy work we're doing here."

Educators seem to be in need of student appreciation, too. Boaz (about 60 years old) who runs the vegetable garden, instructs students agriculture, and also occupies the role of 11th grade cohort coordinator expressed his disappointment of students:

> "There is a lot of ingratitude on the part of the students. They should have given me a better feeling."

However, he finds consolation in *Virtues* graduates:

> "I keep in touch with graduates who remember me in my small niche as an experience for life. I am invited to many weddings and child birth celebrations by graduates."

Nostalgia seems to support the appearance of competence, in contrast to the hard reality. It may also serve as a mechanism for self justification; namely, by showing past successes, responsibility for present failure to attain declared goals - can be passed on to the students. Since that personnel member has, already, proven effective in the past. Thus, nostalgia may be referred to as a survival strategy of personnel in an educational organization. In that light Gamliel's statement that "such a difficult year I cannot recall..." (p.15, above), can be understood.

c. *Lack of appropriately trained personnel.* Typical high school teacher training in Israel includes two major elements: (1) undergraduate studies in one or two disciplines (subjects); followed by (2) certification studies at a university or college school of education, that are supposed to provide a prospetive teacher with methods of teaching those subjects, along with education foundations general knowledge and some skills such as test and achievement evaluation. Management skills of class, organizational aspects of schooling, as well as approaches to, and methods of, teaching non-mainstream students are usually ignored or provided in small doses. Thus, rarely, would one come across a teacher like *Mania*, who puts special efforts in developing methods for teaching her 'disadvantaged' students. Indeed, she is one of the few successful teachers at *Virtues*. The students were observed putting efforts at, and enjoying, her lessons. They confirmed this impression, enthusiastically.

Most other personnel members seem to use the label 'disadvantaged' student (see, for example, pp.13-14, above) as an excuse for resorting to performance of custodial functions, and participating in the process of generating appearances.

d. *Unfeasible declared goals.* Given the type of student population placed at *Virtues*, the competencies of extant personnel, (especially front-line

members) and the stressful setting, both academic (instrumental) and socio-psychological (expressive) goals seem to be too pretentious. The personnel, mostly committed and morally involved in the organization, failing to attain these goals, resort to organiztion maintenance objectives and generation of appearances. Such activities are not conducive to improving school effectiveness; control and disciplining prevail; deviance ensues; frustration and stress become the lot of most personnel members and students. These are reinforced by the mutual distrust, developing between students and personnel, and among personnel members. The cyclical processes just referred to are not conducive to creating an effectively functioning organization.

e. *Survival needs of individual and of the organization.* The principal was aware of the fact that students, *madrichim*, and, possibly, some other personnel, experience and conceive*Virtues* daily life as a closed system. For the principal, however, the organization is a subsystem of a larger suprasystem, and it is he who has to report to the outside world - Ministry of Education, placemnt agencies (e.g., Ministry of Welfare, *Aliyat Hanoar*) parents, neighbor communities, etc. - and present the organization in a favorable way. Thus, the appearances are very useful to carry around and present as the reality; a respectable image is kept and the resources for organization survival are warranted.

The individual personnel member faces a dual problem. First, in face of the futile efforts to reach declared goals, one's integrity, professional and personal, may be damaged; second, an air of performing well on the job must be kept *vis a vis* superordinates. What would be easier than to participate in generating appearances indicating that all is well in order to 'keep the head above the water' in the words of a housefather and the headmaster alike, on two different occasions.

The five presented above factors are not mutually exclusive. Ostensibley, overlappings exist and no attempt was made to cover up, or

purify them. A touch of real life complications was preserved for readers' impression.

Anyway, the factors *in toto* seem to have a substantial explanation power, although other factors, (e.,g. environmental), not considered here, are, probably, active on the scene, too.

In sum, generating appearances (of competence, success, harmony, effectiveness, etc.) seems to be an 'aspirin' for alleviating the stress, and its supporting processes such as conflicts and frustrations, characteristic of everyday reality at school. The failures in attaining declared goals, are covered up by appropriate appearances.

RELATED BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS

Several organizational behavior patterns relevant to school effectiveness, seem to preside in the socio-organizational context of which the *appearances* phenomenon is a daily reality.

The *appearance* phenomenon seems to function as cause, effect and a spurious variable relative to a set of variables obstructing school effectiveness at *Virtues* :

a) *Strict and punitive control.* A pattern of lower status participants being strictly controlled by their superordinates prevails in everyday life at *Virtues*.

a_1 *Controlling personnel.* Especially controlled are "front line" educators - teachers, housemother and *madrichim*.

> "This is a small place. Everything can be seen and heard", relates *Gamliel* to the observer, and indeed seems to be constantly attentive to see and hear any deviance, small or big, among subordinates and students. Detecting any deviance from required behavior, he immediately responds. When a *madrich* shows ignorance, at the supper table, of a forthcoming activity, *Gamliel* mocks at him, in the presence of other *madrichim*, immitating his voice, he said: "You were present at our meeting, weren't you... You must have been asleep there...

> right?! The ridiculed *madrich* blushes and murmurs while others are laughing loudly.

The *madrich* was put in a humiliating social situation, relative to which Peter Berger (1962) says: "...most men have experienced the freezing fear of making oneself ridiculous in some social situations (p.72).

Liberal and friendly attitudes toward students are considered as deviance by management.

> *Sinai*, a ninth grade group *madrich* confides to the observer that he was punished due to his relatively liberal attitudes toward students." They [managment] transmit all messages to the cohort, including my group, via *Malachi* * and thus I become second to him..."

This excommunication was soon perceived by his colleagues and students. Lacking institutional support he became outlawed and victim to students' rage (locked him in the shelter, as described on p. 12 above). Teachers, too, are not exempt of management denunciation. Although perceived as more professional than *madrichim* and thus supposed to be less exposed to management control, liberal attitude of teacher to students has been criticized by the principal.

> At a formal management meeting one evening, the headmaster reviews the situation at 12th grade classes. Among others he says, "There are problems with the teacher *Tzviyah* ... cannot keep students disciplined..." *Yaron* (assertively): The problems are not with *Tzviyah*... the problem is *Tzviyah*. Every year she starts being friendly with students and then unable to manage the class.... every year the same thing..."

a_2 *Controlling students*. The strict control pattern is intensified when the objects are students, who feel very bad about it:

> "They don't let us breath here", a ninth grader tells the observer and five, or so, of his peers nod in agreement. Another student adds, nervously: "Punishments and punishments".

Disciplining students is an all-encompassing preoccupation. Cohort coordinators who had taken on that recently formed role assuming they would have an expressive function, sounded frustrated. One of them related to the observer:

> "We turn more and more into 'sergeant majors'. The management wants us to deal with orderly attendance. We deal more with such matters and less with conversations with individual students."

Such role performance seems to be in line with management expectations. The deputy headmaster defined that role unequivocally:

> "Cohort coordinator role is to take over the technical functions of homeroom teachers".

The most punitive control interface is that of *madrichim* and students. The punitive control, or disciplinarian orientation, identified with *Gamliel*, the omnipotent deputy at *Virtues*, gains primacy in the everyday activity. *Madrichim* realize that, despite the declared goals, what really counts is keeping students disciplined. One of the *madrichim*, when asked about management expectations of *madrichim*, responded without hesitiation.

> "Services; exactly on time... no excuses...; punctuate group convening for social activities...; full attendance at lessons, services, meals, social activities...; all activities; and work."

This response gains credibility in face of the following anecdote:

> *Shimeon*, a *madrich* that was evaluated as incompetent for educational work, soon after he had been hired, was not fired, some of his colleagues attributed it to his dilligent preoccupation with disciplining students (he was very successful in 'hunting' smokers, etc.).

This evidence is in congruence with expectations often transmitted by *Yaron*, and especially *Gamliel*, in the course of residential sub-system personnel meetings. *Shimeon's* case is not ideosyncratic; compliance with those expectations is widespread; and the more dilligent disciplinarians gain Gamliel's favor.

This state of affairs makes the *madrich*, largely, a supervisor of students' participation in the various activities and a *punisher* of truants. The custodial nature of the role is sometimes explained by the *madrichim* themselves as a response to the growing tendency of students from disadvantaged groups to reject the school's management, and to regard the *madrich* as an agent of the management.

It seems that the *madrich* is expected to fulfill, simultaneously, individual and social, custodial functions, despite the inherent tensions between them.

These problems pertaining to the role fo the *madrich* seem to be shared by all *madrichim* at *Virtues*. Eight of the nine *madrichim* who worked at *Virtues* during the school year in which most observations were carried out, had joined at the beginning of that year. Seven of them decided to leave, or were fired, by the end of the same academic year -- an extremely high turnover. The most veteran *madrich* was negotiating with the principal to transfer him to "another job" at *Virtues*. One *madrich* complained that he had become "burnt out" at*Virtues*. Similarly to another *madrich* (p. 15, above), he, too, complained:

> I live near the students and this gives me little chance for privacy. They can wake me up at any time of night. Everybody seems to want something from me: the housemother, the chief *madrich*. But I get very little in return.

These 'feeling at loss' illustrations are a reminder of the stress, characteristic of the total living situations, previously addressed (pp. 14-16, above).

Few personnel members dispute the punishment policy of the residential sub system.

> "I am opposed to sending trouble makers home. When he returns after one or two weeks it is hard to get him back to orderly function." Says Shalom, a blacksmith craft teacher.

Such disagreement with institutional policy is heard very rarely and only in semi-private settings. A control - deviance cycle is the name of the game. The following memo addressed to the students, is a clear demonstration of this cycle; presents recurrent deviant activities; and, illustrates punitive control methods:

Virtues

To: The student population.
Shalom,

Recently, some negative serious phenomena took place in our institution:

a. The students *Danny Abutbul, Yaacov Hamami* and *Menashe Ballulu* were caught smoking cigarettes. *Danny* was expelled for 4 days and his parents were summoned. The parents of *Yaacov* and of *Menashe* were also summoned. The three may be expelled from *Virtues*, if they repeat that behavior. Also, their allowances for the next two weeks are withheld.

b. The students *Malctyahu Shalom, Shlomo Edri* were caught 'in action' playing cards for money, a new disgraceful phenomenon here. *Malctyahu* was expelled for 10 days and will then become a day student. *Shlomo Edri* - a letter containing a strict warning was sent to his parents. On top of that, their allowances for the next two weeks are withheld.

c. The students *Moshe Shitrit* and *Shmuel Katzav* used inappropriate words towards personnel members and students. Because of our respect to the paper we shall not write the disgracful expressions. Considering their negative behavior lately, they were expelled for 4 days and will not be allowed back before a member of each family visits us.

For your information!
Please, improve your behavior for the good of all of us.

Blessings,

Gamliel.

Yaron rationalized the prohibition on smoking cigarettes:

> "I set the red line at smoking cigarettes. Thus we avoid getting to drugs. I know many smoke... OK... Those who get caught are punished."

He himself was involved in *smokers' hunt* and looked and sound elated when telling at a personnnel meeting how successful he was at that. Smoking on Sabbath is a double sin, and may cause expulsion from the residential subsystem. Playing cards for money, which is presented by Gamliel as "a recent influence of the 'street'", may also result in expulsion from school.

Student behavior considered to be a major deviance, threatening the reputation and even the survival of *Virtues* is shoplifting at the neighboring town. Students may not go there for any purpose without consent of the madrich or Gamliel, not even to a movie theatre.

> "Once a week a movie selected by the management, is projected on school premises, and that should suffice" says the principal.

Forming couples is also considered a serious deviance, calling for punitive response. Forming couples is allowed only to 12th graders, provided parents of both, boy and girl, come in and sign a letter of consent to that relationship. However, couples have been formed at all cohorts, sometimes with the confidential consent of non-abiding madrichim. But few *madrichim* would stick their necks out for their students. *Yaron* explained this prohibition:

"At this age they don't really need it..."

Whether he was not informed or preferred overlooking, remained unclear to the author.

A 'deviance-control cycle' evolves; frontline personnel and often managment, too, function as police while students learn how not to get caught. Behavioral norms students adjust to, are those they were.

supposedly, spared by taking them away from their homes and communities.

Such processes are not conducive to personnel satisfaction and self-actualization. Most of them sound rather frustrated. Stress seems to have a self-energizing mechanism. Consequently, a need to resort even more to generating appearances prevails.

Along comes another cycle; namely, self fulfilling prophecy regarding student academic failure. Labelling students as 'disadvantaged' ensues in the expectation that they are incapable of learning -- what Schofield (1982) calls 'ideology of failure' (and cf. Rist, 1973); thus, utilizing a diffused status characteristic (Cohen, 1982) attributed to students of low socio-economic or ethnic background contributes to the goal displacement process. The declared social, developmental and instrumental (academic) goals give way to organizational maintenance and personnel feelings regarding their integrity on the job.

In the course of the academic year it became clear that students perform well in activities perceived as relevant to their occupational future. Girls worked to the satisfaction of the housemothers in cleaning the dormitories, as well as in the kitchen, dining room, and other service and maintenance tasks. They also tried hard and performed well in some of the vocational courses, just as boys did in their vocational classes. This seems to be, in part, due to specific vocational teachers, who do not enact the 'ideology of failure' (Schofield, 1982) in their interactions with students - completely different from what was observed in the academic courses (Sciences, Humanities, Languages, etc.). Indeed, teachers complained, most students lost interest in grades and don't care about matriculation certificate. Failing to attain that certificate is, in Israel, a barrier in the way to gain higher education and most well-paying jobs. Students, like personnel, are preoccupied with survival in the stressful system, mobility aspirations are not at the top of their agenda.

The Wonderful Wizard of Virtues. Rereading the manuscript, a popular literary episode came to mind as a picturesque analogy to the situation at *Virtues* :

> When the wonderful wizard of Oz (Baum, 1979) was stripped of his veil, and found unable to grant what he had promised, Dorothy's comrades accused him of being a humbug. Another defiance followed: "You are a very bad man" said Dorothy. "Oh, no my dear; I'm really a very good man; but I'm a very bad wizard, I must admit" (p. 78).

As long as one cares to wear 'green glasses' (ibid. p.77) 'the emerald boarding school *Virtues* ' persists. However, appearances, including euphemisms are hardly a propituous phenomenon for goal attainment. *Yaron* is not a bad man but he seems to be a 'bad wizard'; so are other personnel members he leads, despite the fact that most all of them seem to be morally involved and working very hard.

CONCLUSIONS

The nature of this study does not allow for reliable generalizations, conclusions and implications. Being an exploratory case study, conclusions and implications should be drawn only tentatively:

Advancement of 'disadvantaged' is often declared by personnel members as the mission of *Virtues.* In this respect an afinity with day schools educating youth from low socio-economic background exists

(e.g.,Kashti & Yosifon, 1985). This stated mission is also congruent with the declared aims of the Ministry of Education (Peled, 1976). However, the difficulties educators encounter in pursuit of this mission lead them into a contradiction between the desired and the real. Consequently, various actors at *Virtues* sense a need for resolving that contradiction for themselves and for others. A pervasive outlet in organizations (Goffman, 1959), which emerged at *Virtues* too, is 'generating appearances'.

The appearances introduced and illustrated in this work seem to constitute a prime part of the everyday knowledge actors carry and provide a framework for their survival efforts in the organizations. The same perspective iluminates the pervasive desire found among personnel members at *Virtues* to be seen and listened to. They crave for rewards; especially, appreciation of the hard and 'holy work' they are pretty sure they have been doing.

Conception of students as inferior, and the stigma imposed on them based on their origin group compose barriers on the way to accomplishing the mission of advancing the 'disadvantaged'. School effectiveness, that is, attaining declared expressive and instrumental goals has not, and, probably, could not have been reached when personnel members retain a stereotypical concept of students.

This seems to be true for any education setting, let alone, for a powerful and stressful one such as a boarding school, where students are exposed, by far more than in day schools, to stigmatization consequences. Such an environment is not conducive to school effectiveness and the goal displacement process, in which organization maintenance and personnel survival needs gain primacy, is unavoidable. Such a situation is calling for generating appearances. The motto at the opening of this article, seems to be, then, most applicable to the personnel everyday life experiences at *Virtues* . Their reality is, to a large extent, one of generating appearances.

Unlike a British public school principal, who serves as role model to his students (Weinberg, 1967), *Yaron's* students do not belong to the same

social milieu with their principal; their chances to move into that milieu are close to nil and they are not taken in by attempts to present such an option as viable for them. The mission of advancing 'disadvantaged' students seems to be a mission impossible for extant personnel, given the prejudices they hold and the framework within which they operate.

Implications. This study seems to allude to several implications: First, regarding social science research, it calls for caution in interpretation of studies based on actors' evidence via conventional research insturments. 'Social desirability', whether consciously or unconsciously, appears to be a factor introducing bias in research; most of the appearances reviewed in this study would, probably, have been presented as realities in 'pen and paper' instruments - most pervasive in such research. Second, for educational administration practitioners an allusion is made to self-deception tendencies of management regarding their own, and their organization, effectiveness. It is recommended, therefore, that school administrators have access to research and development resources, such as organization consultants, who would be available for coming into school, upon request, diagnose the organization; assist management and personnel in becoming aware of, and understanding the problems; and then, if requested, lead a designed change intervention.

Finally, regarding eduction of 'disadvantaged' students in boarding schools, a reassessment of current policies should be undertaken. Maybe the centralized education and other systems, taking youngsters out of their communities to be placed and 'nurtured' at boarding schools could be replaced by alternative approaches such as improving local education institutions. A boarding school is incapable of providing much more than an appearance of community. Like a total institution "... it is something more than a formal organization...but it is something less than a community" (Goffman, 1961, p. 103). It seems conceivable that strengthening

community education systems may increase involvement and mutual responsibility. In such localities, one may conjecture, education systems, becoming the apple of the eye of a community (and consequently a banner for community pride), would attract concerned and 'involved in student' personnel, funtioning as authentic role models for them -- thus, having better chances to succeed in advancing 'disadvantaged' students.

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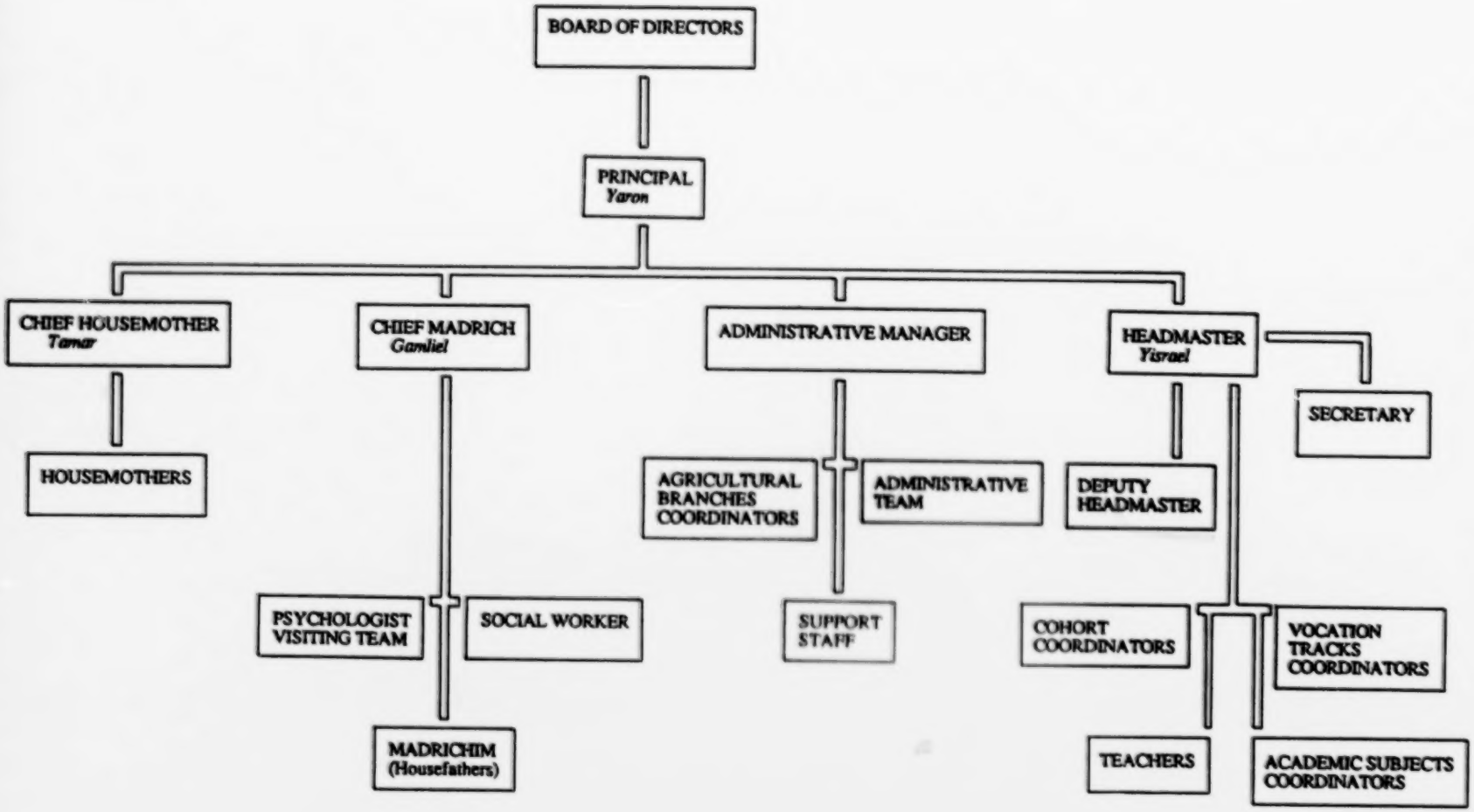

APPENDIX A: VIRTUE'S ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Appendix B:

STUDENT DAILY ROUTINE AT *VIRTUES*

5:45	Wake up
6:00	Morning services (in grade group, boys and girls, separately)
6:50	Jewish Law training (boys instructed by *madrich*, girls by housemother)
7:30	Breakfast
8:00-13:00	Attending classes
13:00-15:00	Personal time - infirmary and other necessities available to students
15:00-19:00	Attending classes
19:10	Evening services (group activity)
19:30	Supper
20:00-21:30	Evening social activity or homework preparation (controlled by *madrichim*)
22:00	Lights out (eleventh and twelfth graders at 22:30)

Three times, weekly, each student is excused from the first three lessons so he/she can work between 08:00 and 10:00. Tuesday school ends at 17:00 so that a school-wide enriching activity may be held.

Evening activities are:

Sunday:	Choir, folk dancing, etc. (must choose one)
Monday:	Homework preparation
Tuesday:	Social meeting of group with *madrich*
Wednesday:	Homework preparation
Thursday:	Group activity with *madrichim*
Friday:	Sabbath eve services at synagogue (all students, *madrichim* and housemothers)
Saturday:	morning: Sabbath morning services at synagogue afternoon: Sabbath activity in groups with *madrichim*

Appendix C:

GLOSSARY OF PSEUDONYMS AND RECURRENT HEBREW TERMS

Boaz	Agricultural instructor, in charge of the vegetable garden and eleventh grade cohort coordinator
Erella	Tenth grade cohort coordinator, and teacher
Gamliel	Chief *madrich*
Haya	Housemother
Levi	Former principal at *Virtues*
Madrich	Housefather; pl. *madrichim* (Hebrew)
Malachi	Ninth graders group *madrich*
Mania	Girls' vocational tracks coordinator
Minah	Housemother
Nehamah	Chief secretary
Rivkah	Housemother
Shekel	Boys' vocational tracks coordinator
Shimeon	11th grade *madrich*; judged to be incompetent for educational work but stayed until the end of academic year.
Simha	Housemother
Sinai	Ninth grade group *madrich*
Tamar	Chief housemother
Tzviyah	Twelfth grade teacher; considered by *Yaron* as too liberal towards students
Virtues	Name of school
Yaron	The principal
Yisrael	The headmaster